1: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1954 RR1 Siberia RR1

(previously N.K.V.D.). Under the general direction of the latter a powerful state enterprise called 'Dalstroy' has come into being in the Soviet Far East. It has taken over many functions that are usually carried out by local government organs. Dalstroy is primarily a mining trust for the development of gold mining on the upper reaches of the Kolyma River. Similar to some mining companies in the colonies of other powers, such as the Société Minière du Haut Katanga in the Belgian Congo, the Dalstroy rules almost as sovereign master over the territory where it exploits the underground riches. Although administrative authorities do exist in the land of the Dalstroy they are completely dependent on the directorate of this enterprise.

The activities of the Dalstroy are many-sided. The 'Mining Administration' ('Gornoe Upravlenie') is only one of several big departments over which the Dalstroy director and his two deputy directors rule. In addition to the 'Political Administration', there is an 'Administration for Agriculture' supervising the work of the local collective farms and state farms, and an 'Administration for Road Building'. There are also a fair number of subsidiary trusts and enterprises which take their orders from the Dalstroy director. There are, for instance, the supply organizations 'Dalstroysnab' and 'Kolymsnab', the coal-mining trust 'Dalugol', a building trust, the state trading firm 'Magadantorg' and a special fleet which connects the Dalstroy with Vladivostok. This entire huge organization is kept together by a small army of M.V.D. men and by a whole network of 'political departments', the activity of which extends to the most distant parts of the Kolyma mining district. The bulk of the workers, technicians and officials of the Dalstroy consists of actual convicts, or of ex-convicts who have been set free because of 'good behaviour'. A list of over 400 Dalstroy officials and workers who were awarded orders and medals at the beginning of 1941 shows that the Dalstroy is a microcosm of the Soviet Union. Indeed, a list of people decorated with the medal 'For Excellency of Labour' starts rather significantly with the following three names:

1. Abdulgasimov, Nazhim, miner;
2. Akopyan, Amayak Avanesovich, newspaper editor;
3. Aksenov, Vladimir Mikhailovich, driver. . . .[15]

Of these three the first is a Moslem, the second an Armenian and the third a Russian. The order is perhaps not very characteristic since the Russian element predominates by far among the more prominent Dalstroy people, but there are also Ukrainians, Georgians, Armenians, Jews and Moslems among them.

The colonization activities of Dalstroy have changed the character of the hinterland of the Okhotsk Sea, which, until 1931, was still virtually uninhabited. The most palpable achievement has been the foundation of the town of Magadan, the post-war population of which has been

311 The excess of dampness in vegetation season is a handicap even for agriculture and makes difficult the extension of the cultivated areas. New land for cultivation must as a rule be won laboriously from nature by drying it out. More and more the extended Zeya-Bureya Plain and the area along the Amur have become quite thickly settled, and large parts of the famous "Amur [162] Prairie" have been transformed into cultivated land. It is predominantly Russians who live here. The Chinese who immigrated here earlier have been pushed back over the Amur--in part by force. In all the rest of the area, however, /30/ untamed nature dominates the landscape, which is traversed at most by a few Tungus or Russian hunters. A wealth of gold has lured numerous Russians into this 316 wasteland, too, especially in the area around the upper courses of the left tributaries of the Amur. A locally very active gold industry has come into existence, which today is organized by the state and which has drawn even this distant region into the economy.

133 The Ussuri country is divided into two completely different parts: the huge mountain mass of the Sikhote-Alin', which fills the entire area from the Bay of Peter the Great in the south to the mouth of the Amur in the north; and the Ussuri-Khanka lowlands, which extend west of the Sikhote-Alin' in the same direction and continue south of the Khanka Lake without marked interruption as far as the Bay of Peter the Great.

The Sikhote-Alin' is a forest-covered, strongly valleyed /zertaltes/ mountain mass, which is divided into several ridges running parallel to the coast. The shapes of the mountains are soft without especially marked edges and projections. More often plateau-like shapes predominate here, too. The heights in general lie between 650 and 850 meters; the valleys, however, are deeply carved out. Rising slowly from the west, the mountain mass descends steeply to the sea and only rarely leaves free a narrow coastal indentation plain on which there arises small, poverty-stricken fishing villages. The nearness of the sea crossed by a cold stream causes a cool, foggy, rainy, unfriendly summer, thus producing similar conditions to those found on the entire coast extending to the north beyond Okhotsk. Swampy valleys and forests dripping with a cool dampness and with a more northern stamp are typical marks of this area.

132 The western side of the Sikhote-Alin' and the Ussuri-
137 Khanka lowlands, on the other hand, correspond more to the Amur country. Warm to hot summers joined with high rainfall and a

strong inclination to marshiness are distinguishing marks for this area. The Sikhote-Alin' stretching parallel to the coast keeps back the coolness and also the fog from the sea and allows the sun to have a stronger effect. Everywhere the more southerly position makes itself apparent. In the forests of Sikhote-Alin' deciduous trees appear more and more in the foreground, increasing toward the south, until finally, in magnificent specimens, they form the sole type of tree. In the cultivated zone, too, which stretches along the entire lowlands, typically Manchurian-Chinese plants become noticeable in increasing measure toward the south. Kaoliang and other millet, soya beans, and rice appear noticeably on the scene. There is a change in the population, too. In the northern part of the lowlands, as far as Khanka Lake, Russians and Ukranians predominate; in the extreme south, Chinese and Koreans are in the majority. The Ussuri-Khanka lowland is relatively thickly settled, the Sikhote-Alin' itself, on the contrary, is in large areas as good as uninhabited, except for some mining areas in the south, where /31/ coal primarily is mined. Native Tungus traverse the Sikhote-Alin' in smaller numbers than in the old days, and in addition there are Russian hunters and Chinese collectors, who are looking for secret, legendary plants.

Sakhalin Island stretches over 950 kilometers in a meridional direction. The southern part is traversed by two parallel mountain ridges, which are separated from one another by a relatively wide depression. The eastern mountain chain is shorter but higher, and its peak of 2,013 meters is the highest elevation on the island. Toward the north the mountain ridges flatten out and give way to a hilly plain. The cool, foggy air masses blow unhampered over the land here, while in the south a difference in climate is caused by the mountain chains. The eastern slopes are cool, rainy and unfriendly, while the western side appears somewhat milder. The southern parts of the island, which were Japanese from 1905 to 1945 and only now have again become Russian , are generally more favorable. In terms of its landscape, Sakhalin can be designated a damp, cool, forested mountain country, but in numerous places treeless moss steppes appear, which recall the tundras of the north. Once feared as a Russian prisoners' colony, Sakhalin is advancing economically more and more because of its petroleum and coal resources.

The Okhotsk coastal area begins at the Uda Bay and encompasses, in a narrow coastal strip, the Sea of Okhotsk as far as Penzhina Bay in the extreme northeast. In the western part, which stretches

000 even of raising it. However, this proposal has been tried out but little in practice.

132 134 312 /56/ In addition to the general water supply, the supplying of drinking water in the permafrost regions in winter causes many difficulties, especially for larger settlements. Since many rivers freeze to the ground, the water must often be gotten from far away. In many places artificially caused formations of ice on top of ice are used to help in smaller settlements. But it would lead us too far astray to go into detail here on the various and often also unique methods of procuring water.

132 134 316 The permafrost is also of great importance in connection with mining and with the extractions of natural resources generally. In pit mining the permafrost sets great hardness against the invasion of man. Even diamond drills fail sometimes, and, if the motor stops for even a moment, the drill freezes fast in the water of the hole being drilled. The pits and galleries are mostly firm and hold even without supporting beams, the danger of chokedamp is slight, and also ground water seldom appears, and only occasionally do water break-ins occur. In open mining the permafrost must be dynamited, but then the blocks knocked loose turn into bulky pulp. Gold extraction has to overcome special difficulties in the working of gold wash-works which mostly are in the permafrost and lie under a thick, unfrozen layer of earth which can be removed rather easily. In the most important gold regions the most modern machinery is employed to process the gold-bearing sand in one vein with everything from dredge to dressing-floor, but all these technically complete establishments conduct a difficult battle with the permafrost, whose hardness gives extraordinary resistance. The natural thawing under the air temperature of the summer proceeds so slowly that man must help it along. The primitive thawing with the aid of wood and coal fires has disappeared, and jets of water also do not suffice here. At present, steam is employed everywhere, and new announcements report that the use of electricity is being considered for the future.

132 134 The role played by permafrost in connection with vegetation is many sided, but the mutual relationships are still too little clarified. For the agrarian economy the permafrost is a more favorable factor as a source of ground dampness, especially in the interior which suffers from a shortage of summer rainfall. Here the dampness of the ground is a natural compensation. It is due to the exploitation of these favorable conditions that Soviet Russia has succeeded in spreading agriculture,

knowledge of the wealth of this region were spurs to pushing recklessly forward in the exploitation by using work camps. As a consequence, the Kolyma area today is among the most notorious regions in the Soviet Union, and is one of those most feared, because of the harshness of its climate. 135

For the opening up of this area building was done on the harbor and city of Magadan on Nagayevo Bay. The inhabitants of this city today are estimated to be 50,000. A highway was laid out to connect with the gold fields; by 1940 this highway had already attained a length of more than 700 kilometers, and it connected all the important mining centers. The road is kept usable for trucks the whole year through. The supplying of the entire area is done via the sea route, for the most part via Magadan, and for the rest from the north via the Kolyma. Since these connections, however, are closed off by ice for more than six months during the long winter, they proceeded to create a permanent land connection by building a highway from the center of the gold district to Yakutsk on the Lena. Of considerable importance for the development of this regions is also the fact that hard coal has been found on the Kolyma in the vicinity of the town of Verkhne-Kolymsk. Some Sovkhoz have been founded as a local source of supply for vegetables, milk, and fresh meat. [491]

The main gold fields lie west of the Buyunda, a /169/ right tributary of the Kolyma, primarily in the area of the Srednikan and Orotukan rivers. At first only the very productive gold streams were exploited, but then the mining of mine gold was also taken up. Mine gold is especially rich in the mountains on the Srednikan, on the Utina, and on the Khatynakh. The most important centers of the gold district are Srednikan, Orotukan, Khatynakh, and Seymchan.

Gold extraction in the Kolyma region developed as follows in comparison with the total production of the Soviet Union (Figures are in 1,000 kilograms): 316 433

	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
Soviet Union	83.0	120.0	149.0	163.0	176.0	192.0	210.0
Kolyma Region	0.3	1.2	8.0	12.3	20.0	30.0	51.0
Percentage of the whole supplied by the Kolyma Region	0.4	1.0	5.4	7.5	11.3	15.6	24.3

(Table continued on following page)

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433

	1940	1941
Soviet Union	225.0	240.0
Kolyma Region	51.0	55.6
Percentage of the whole supplied by the Kolyma Region	22.7	23.2

The share of the Kolyma region has risen to almost 25 percent of the total extraction done in the Soviet Union. According to definite plans, gold production in the Kolyma area is to be raised to 75,000 kilograms. Friedensburg, in his book on "Gold" which appeared recently, has collected together in a table of figures (63) all estimates and

63. Friedensburg, F., "Gold," Die Metallischen Rohstoffe /Metallic Raw Material/, Vol. 3, 2nd edition (Stuttgart, 1953), p. 178.

reckonings on the total gold extraction in the Soviet Union. With justice he points out the confusion that rules on this question even in foreign agencies versed in such affairs. Nevertheless, I do not shy from bringing the above table which rests on my own sources. The present production may be assumed to be approximately 250,000 kilograms (1952). In any case, it is certain that the Kolyma region stands at the head of all gold fields in the Soviet Union. According to the supplies explored, mining is assured for 15 to 20 years if the extraction remains at 75,000 kilograms.

The Forests and the Use of Wood

311 The forests of Transbaykal and of the Soviet Far Eastern regions are, by European standards, as large as countries. The forested area covers around 1,800,000 square kilometers. While the Far Eastern regions contribute around 17.5 percent of the total area of the USSR, these regions provide 21 percent of the total forested area.

The distribution and extent of the forests in the Soviet Far East are shown in the following table:

(Table on following page)

deposits can be reckoned among the richest in the Soviet Union. Thus, here in the middle of a remote wasteland a small industrial area has come into being, whose center is the town of Gorodok and which already has more than 10,000 inhabitants. The center is a large wolfram-molybdenum works with modern mines, ore dressing installations, conveying and suspension railroads. The valley slopes here are still grown over by thick taiga. However, toward the east the forest withdraws from the lower slopes, which appear far from one another and form an extensive grass steppe area, which merges with the Selenga steppe without interruption. The valley of the Dzhida is bordered on the south by the Dzhidinskiy Mountain Range named after the river. The Mongolian border runs along the watershed of this mountain range.

The Khamar-Daban continues toward the east with dimensions which become smaller morphologically and geologically. However, the Selenga, which breaks through the mountain in a narrow valley, is usually considered to be the eastern border of the Khamar-Daban. The Selenga circumscribes the eastern part of the Khamar-Daban and empties into Lake Baykal in a broadly projecting delta.

/213/ /Sketch Map of the Buryat-Mongol ASSR:/

/214/ The Selenga Delta is a heaped up plain /Aufschüttungsebene/ which on the mean lies 7 to 8 meters above the water level of Lake Baykal, to which the delta slopes in terraces. The lower terrace, which already bears sea deposits, is completely flat, while the remaining parts are gently rolling. The northeast, the real present-day delta, is traversed by numerous dead and living arms of the Selenga, while the southwest is flowed through by some tiny little rivers, which come directly from the Khamar-Daban. In terms of its landscape, the delta represents a dry steppe, in whose lower, sunken-in parts swamps are imbedded. The delta is fairly heavily populated by Russians and Buryat, who pursue both fishing and agriculture. Irrigation is used in the agriculture. The center of this area is Kabansk, where the railroad coming from the west touches the Selenga for the first time. The products of the fishing are stored here in modern cold storage installations and made ready to be transported away.[1]

From here the railroad uses the valley of the Selenga and reaches Ulan-Ude, the capital of the Buryat Republic, above the break-through by the Khamar-Daban. The city lies on the right bank of the Selenga at the mouth of the Uda, which is navigable by rafts. In 1926 still a small, dusty steppe town with 29,918 inhabitants, Ulan-Ude by 1939 had become a modern industrial city with 129,419 inhabitants. In

[1] [i.e. Kabansk -- Analyst]

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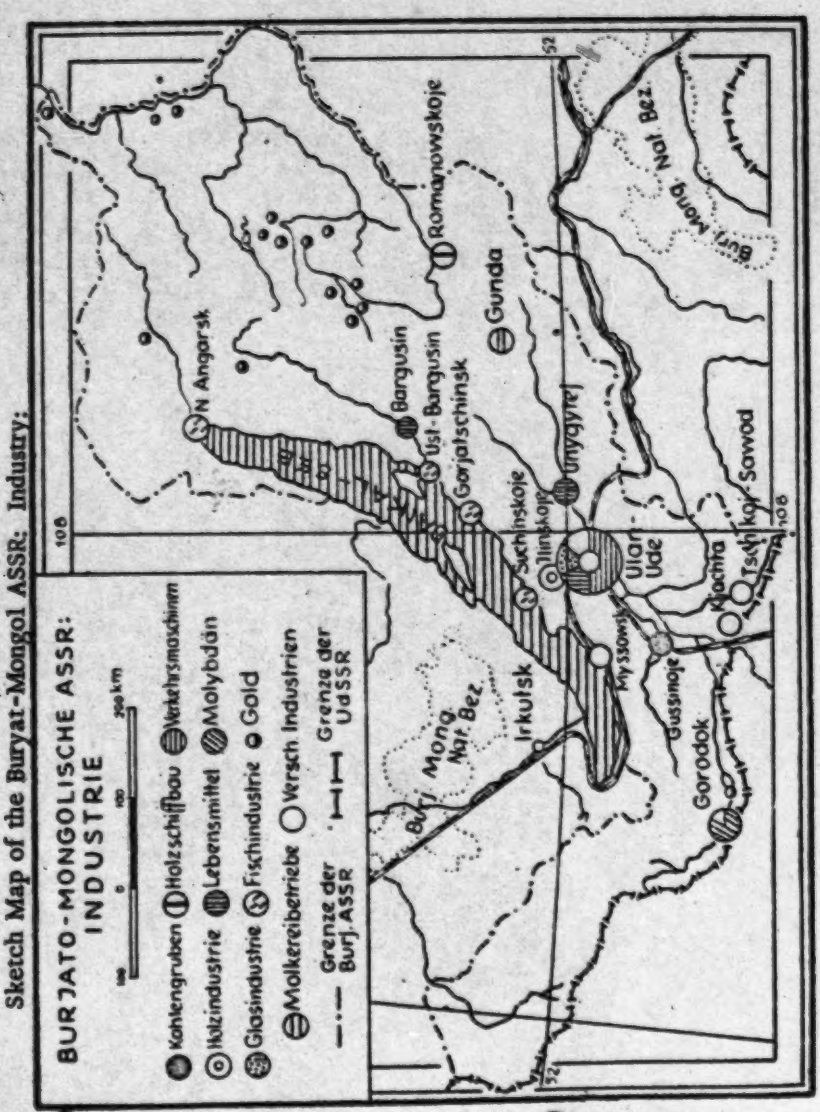


- Coal Mines
- Construction of wooden ships
- Transport machinery
- Wood industry
- Groceries
- Molybdenum
- Glass industry
- Fish industry
- Gold
- Dairy plants
- Various industries

/215/

- Border of the Buryat ASSR
- Border of the USSR

133 these hollows, as a rule, the rivers find their origin.

Southeast of the Yablonovyy Ridge and its western continuation, the already-mentioned Malkhanskiy Mountain Range, there extends the rather wide valley of the Chikoy and of the Ingoda, which is for
361 the most part settled by Russians. Here the Russian villages lie along the rivers like pearls on a string, while only a few kilometers away there stretch mountain forests which are still uninhabited. The best connections to these areas of settlement are from the railroad stations of Khilok and Mogzon.

The capital of the region, Chita, lies at the point where the Chita River flows into the Ingoda. After the construction of the railroad line, Chita quickly developed from a small town into a large city, which by 1939 already had 102,555 inhabitants, and at present its population probably already exceeds 150,000. The city is built on both sides of the river of the same name, and, lying 660 meters above sea level, the city rises like an amphitheater on two terraces of the land rising toward the north. It lies in a dry, healthy region. Chita constitutes the economic center of the entire region. It is especially known for its fur and leather processing. In addition, there are concentrated in the city important flour mills, saw mills, and
•[216] rather large repair shops for locomotives and railroad cars. A few
[217] kilometers west of the city lies the Chernovskiye Kopi, one of the most important coal districts in the area. Natural calcinated soda is extracted from the Doroninskoye Lake, which lies further up in the valley of the Ingoda.

133 From Chita the Ingoda breaks through on the southeast first the Cherskiy Mountain Range and then the Daur Mountain Range, and, then again bending in the direction of Lake Baykal, it finally follows the depression between the Daur Mountain Range and the Borshchovochnyy Mountain Range. In this depression the Ingoda unites with the Onon, which comes from the south. These two rivers then form the Shilka, the left source river of the Amur.

Approximately 60 kilometers below the point where the rivers flow together, and at the Nercha which flows into the Shilka from the north, is the city of Nerchinsk (28,000 inhabitants), and 85 kilometers further down lies Sretensk. Here the well-known Nerchinsk steppe island stretches on the left side of the Shilka, principally between the Shilka's two tributaries, the Nercha and Kuenga. /223/ /Sketch Map of Chita Oblast:/ The bulk of this steppe island consists of an almost ideal plain. The rest of the steppe island is gently

rolling with gentle rises toward the edges. In the ground lies a granite foundation, over which is liparite and tuff, covered over by a thick layer of lacustrine deoposits, which point to the formation of the steppe basin from a former lake (Gladtsin, 69). Striking is the present day

69. Gladtsin, I.N., Geomorfologicheskii ocherk Zabaykaliya /Geomorphological Sketch of Transbaykal/, Trudy of the Geographical Institute of the Academy of Science, (Moscow, 1938), p. 174.

dryness, which forms a sharp contrast to the forest landscapes surrounding the steppe island. The low position (620 to 680 meters above sea level) as a depression between the contiguous mountain chains, may well be the reason for the special climatic conditions prevailing here. The fertile steppe soil, in many cases designated as black earth, has lead to thick settlement, and, accordingly, the grass steppe only rarely now shows itself in its original dress. The levelness of the steppe is interrupted only by flat, mostly dry valleys with gentle slopes. /224/ In the deeper places there appear damp meadows, often swamps, and also not uncommonly even salt-pans. The slopes of the valleys sloping to the north are overgrown with birches, poplars, meadows, and bushes, especially if the valleys have the character of a ravine. The transition to the forest landscapes occurs quickly. However, the souther slopes remain free of forests the longest and often appear in contiguous taiga as small forest steppe islands. Toward the Shilka the steppe plain breaks off with a steep, heavily valleyed, high step, which from the river often gives the impression of a mountain land. Next to the dairy and meat economy, the cultivation of grain stands in first place in the agriculture of the steppe island. The economic center is Nerchinsk with its mill plants, brandy and alcohol distilleries. In terms of transportation Sretensk has a better location, for there the regular Amur shipping begins. West of Sretensk in Kokuy there is a shipyard.

The Transbaykal Railroad runs from Nerchinsk on further on the left shore of the Shilka as far as Kuenga, and from here a branch railroad leads to Sretensk. The main railroad line, which from here on bears the name of Amur Railroad,[1] leaves the Shilka Valley at Kuenga and circumscribes the Shilkinsk Mountain Range in a great arc. Here in the north, lying in a side valley of the Kuenga and connected by a railroad line, are the coal mines of Bukachacha, which in their production stand in first place in Transbaykal, and farther to the east around the Mogocha Station lie extensive gold fields.

The wealth of natural resources is, however, of far greater 135
significance for the economic development of the future.* In this 489
connection the non-ferrous metals in addition to iron ore should be mentioned primarily. The still insufficient connection with the transportation network, however, offers the greatest handicap to the exploitation of the natural resources. Apart from the railroad line which runs from Karymskoye to Otpor to Manchuria, there are only land routes available. Even the very important zinc-lead mines in Khapcheranga, in Mangut, and on the Sokhondo can be reached from the Ulstuy station, west of Karymskoye, only by a built-up land route which is around 320 kilometers long. And by the same route, too, the produce of the mines must be brought to the railroad line on trucks. Because of the smaller differences in height the land route along the Onon valley to the Olovyannaya station has recently been used in perference to the above-mentioned route, which crosses more mountain ridges. Also the regions in the angle between the Manchurian side branch of the railroad and the Argun can only be reached by built-up land routes and truck transportation. Borzya on the railroad line appears to be 361
developing here into the traffic center. Toward the east a narrow-gauge railroad leads to the /229/ non-ferrous metal mines of the Argun district, and toward the southwest a similar line leads to Choybalsan in the Mongolian People's Republic. The city itself, located in the middle of the Argun steppe which is rich in livestock, has a large meat plant. In addition to Borzya there should also be mentioned on the Manchurian branch of the railroad the city of Olovyannaya, which has already been mentioned several times and which is known for its tin works. The bulk of the other localities have already been listed in the discussion of the natural resources.

*[i.e. of the Aginsk steppe -- Analyst]

The Vitim Plateau and the Northern Forested Mountain Provinces

To the north of the Yablonovyy Ridge, spreading east of the 133
Ikatskiy Mountain Range, is the Vitim Plateau, which is adjoined on the north by a series of mountain ridges. The entire region represents a forest mountain range landscape, which climatically is very raw and which makes it very difficult for man to make his way here. Agriculture disappears almost entirely here or is limited to small islands which are scattered sporadically. Only Tungus hunters and reindeer breeders in small numbers traverse the thick taiga and pass a laborious life . However, these wastelands conceal extraordinarily rich gold 316 ●
streams, which are diffused especially in the central part of the Vitim Plateau and which have brought into being active gold

●316 mining. Accordingly, these parts have been best explored and are best known.

/299/ /Sketch Map of the Vitim Plateau and the Northern Mountain Forest Provinces/1

133 /230/ Here in the northeastern continuation of Transbaykal, the characteristic morphological traits are also clearly marked. There are old root plains, which are dissolved into horsts and grabens by breaks, with contiguous mountain ridges and wide valley plains appearing in addition to wide, gently rolling, high plains which have only mountain cores projecting above them. The old disturbance lines running toward the northeast in the Lake Baykal direction also traverse this area and determine the essential border lines of the morphological units. Accompanying the metamorphic and mass rocks of the Archeozoic era there are already here more recent sediments, and above all very frequently there are large basalt coverings, which are of decisive importance for the surface structure of various regions. The Ice Age has been influential in the morphological shaping in places, and has heaped up large moraines in the valleys. Generally the phenomena of frost and solifluction appear far more often than in the rest of Transbaykal.

The Vitim Plateau is formed from the growing together of the Transbaykal mountain ridges stretching there from the southwest. The bulk of the plateau is bordered by the Vitim itself. This river flows first toward the south, then turns sharply toward the northeast and then toward the north-northwest. The interior of the high plain is drained by tributaries of the Vitim, principally by the Tsipa and its tributary, the Amalat.

The plateau represents a monotonous high plain, traversed by flat-sloping embankments; between these embankments there are swampy plains covered by thick larch taiga. These plains often extend over ten kilometers and more without the slightest change. The little tiny rivers flow in flat, open valleys; larger rivers, on the other hand, have sunk 40 to 50 meters into the high plain with one side, washed away underneath, often appearing to be steep and rocky, while the other side extends as a damp, swampy plain, filled with small lakes. At present, side erosion predominates in all the valleys. The watersheds rise 400 to 600 meters above the bottoms of the valleys, but the watersheds lie at a very great distance from them. The absolute height of the main watershed reaches 1,700 to 1,870 meters with the passes having a height of 1,385 to 1,490 meters (

1 [Cf. cat. 116, p. 261 -- Analyst]

becomes part of and continues the direction of its tributary toward the 133
northeast until it empties into the Vitim. In the Tsipa-Bambuyka valley and in the Amalat-Tsipa valley there are tectonic lines running in the Lake Baykal direction. These lines here are crossed by disturbance lines running southeast-northwest. These lines seem to be indicated by the middle course of the Tsipa and the northwest direction of the Vitim.

The valley of the upper Tsipa is indicated as the tectonic continuation of the Barguzin valley. It attains an extraordinary width (up to 25 kilometers and more) and represents the floor of a former important fresh water lake, whose surface, clearly indicated by terraces, lay at 1,129 meters above sea level. The present-day valley basin is taken up principally by peat moors and meadows with clusters of grass, in which a large number of lakes of all sizes have remained as remnants of the former water basin. The largest lakes are Baunt, Busani, and Okunevskiy lakes. Baunt Lake, through which the Tsipa flows, lies at a height of 992 meters. The southern part of this depression, which is rich in lakes, is used by a tributary of the Tsipa, the Tsipikan, whose source neighbors on that of the Vitim. In this area, on the upper Tsipikan and Vitim, lie the richest gold fields in the Vitim Plateau. Toward the east the former lake basin thins out to a narrow valley; and, accordingly, boulder barriers occur easily to stop the Tsipa and force it toward the south. The tectonically determined valley, however, as has already been stated, continues in the same direction toward the northeast and serves as a river bed for part of the Bambuyka and for all of the Tuldunin.

The most important gold regions of the Vitim Plateau are in 316 ●
the upper courses of the Tsipikan, Vitim, and Lesser Amalat; in short, they are deposited somewhat toward the west, almost in the central part of the plateau. The gold streams in large part lie in the permafrost area, and, accordingly, the dressing of the ore and the extraction of the gold takes place with difficulty, even though dredges and mechanical gold washing installations are employed. The supplying of the area causes special difficulty, since supplies must be brought through vast, uninhabited taiga wilderness. To be sure, Baunt Lake supplies fish, meat comes in part from the reindeer herds of the Tungus, potatoes and vegetables are cultivated to a slight extent on the spot, but the outside world must be / 233/ relied on for the rest of the supplies. For this the Barguzin Valley plays the primary role, because the shortest routes, although difficult ones, lead from it to the gold districts.

316 [491] 509] Land road connections also exist toward the south via Romanovskoye on the Vitim to Chita. A rapid and continuous means of transportation has recently been ensured by an airline, which is flown regularly and which connects Chita with Tsipikan, the center of the northern gold district.

133 To the north of the Tsipa-Bambuyka valley rises the Muya mountain country, which is divided into two long ridges by the river of the same name which flows toward the northeast to the Vitim. These two long ridges are the Southern Muya Mountain Range and the Northern Muya Mountain Range. The northern border of the latter is formed by the extended valley of the Upper Angara, which flows toward the west-southwest to Lake Baykal.

The Southern Muya Mountain Range, a mighty, massive horst, forms the watershed between the Tsipa and the Muya. It has a raw, wild appearance with a ridge of numerous gol'tsy, with an entire series of heights, crowned with snow, rising over 2,000 meters. The picture of the entire mountain range, however, is not unified, and the wealth of varying forms is determined by the change in the rock. The former root surface is, to be sure, heavily destroyed, but it is still always recognizable. In the higher places traces of an old glaciation are to be found everywhere in the form of circus /circular?/ valleys/Zirkustäler/, trough valleys, round basin lakes /Karseen/ and basin moors /Karmooren/, and, in the valleys, deposits of boulders and rubble. Because the Muya Valley lies at the slight altitude of 450 to 600 meters, the slope toward the north is much sharper than the slope toward the south to the Tsipa Valley, which generally has a height of more than 900 meters. The passes are difficult, small in number, and 1,450 to 1,700 high. From the swamps at the foot of the mountain range rise slopes covered with thick taiga. Here the ascent into the narrow valleys overgrown with shrubs is especially difficult. Only at heights where the vegetation discontinues, is there an opportunity for free movement.

The valley of the Muya is determined tectonically as a depression. It attains a width of up to 30 kilometers. A mixture of deposits of old and recent date makes the valley plain appear rich in variety. Hills, long embankments, sand bars with closed off lakes, in between swamps and moors displace one another. Terrace formations on the border of the valley and widely diffused lake sediments permit the basin of a former lake to be recognized in the valley.

The Northern Muya Mountain Range, likewise a horst, is

133 Gold streams are mined on the Ketemakhta, a left tributary of the [316] upper Kalar. Connection with the outside world is provided by [487] mountain paths, which lead toward the south to the Mogocha Station on the Amur Railroad.

The Olekminsk Stanovik comprises the entire area around the upper course of the Olekma and at the same time forms the watershed for the Amur. The entire region is described as a forest-covered plateau, whose general height lies between 950 and 1,000 meters. The river valleys are mostly deeply etched, and lie 80 to 200 meters below the surface of the plateau. The ridge between the Olekma and its right tributary the Tungir bears the name of Dzhaliro-Tungirskiy Mountain Range; otherwise individual designations are not known. The watershed for the Amur forms a flat ridge, which generally is only 800 to 900 meters high. Toward the south, toward the Amur, this ridge gives way very quickly to hilly country, which is interrupted by the broad valley areas of the numerous waters flowing into the Amur. The most important of these is the Amazar, whose valley [237] is also used for a stretch by the Amur Railroad. In contrast to the thick larch forests, which cover the bulk of the Stanovik, the vegetation on the slopes inclined toward the Amur includes numerous deciduous trees and thus shows already a more friendly picture. Gold is the 316 most valuable product of the regions. The river valleys between the upper Tungir and the Amazar are especially rich in gold. These valleys are very well opened up because of their nearness to the railroad. The center of gold mining is the city of Mogocha, which has approximately 30,000 inhabitants. It lies on the railroad on the left side of the Amazar. The alluvial sands of the little rivers flowing into the Amur also have gold and, therefore, from early times have [361] enticed many men who then remained in the land. Accordingly, the entire strip of land between the railroad and the Amur is relatively thickly settled. Worthy of mention here is the valley of the Urusha, which is crossed /237/ by the railroad at the station of the same name. In the vicinity of Urusha brown coal deposits have been determined, and, west of Urusha in the vicinity of the Yerofei Pavlovich station (which has more than 20,000 inhabitants), there are also usable tin deposits.

The Oldoy-Zeya Mountain Country

133 East of the area around the upper course of the Olekma, the

133

Stanovoy in two places, reports, it is characteristic of the entire structure of the Stanovoy that the plateau in the middle slopes both toward the north and also toward the south in step-shaped breaks, which stretch in a latitudinal direction. Also in terms of landscape there is a difference between the two outer zones. In the north the valleys are mostly filled with forest, and only the deepest places are taken up by moss hills and moss swamps, while the heights appear bare of forest and are covered with rock ruins and boulders or consist of smooth, steeply towering, contiguous bare rock. In the south, on the other hand, /239/ all the heights have thick forests, and only the valley areas are without forest, as a consequence of the greater swampiness. In contrast to the rest of the Stanovoy, the area around the source of the Zeya is also mountainous in the south. [137]

South of the Stanovoy stretches the upper Zeya's broad graben depression which is filled with forests and swamps. Opposite it and coming from the west is the valley of the Gilyuy which is significantly narrower. Both are among the richest gold fields in the Far Eastern regions and are, therefore, better known. The valley floors and even the gentle plateau slopes are mostly covered with a thick layer of moss drenched with dampness, while thick larch taiga grows on the better-drained slopes and elevated places. Deciduous trees occur here only very rarely. As a consequence of the predominant permanently frozen earth, there are often moss hills containing ice cores. These hills are often several meters high, and, if they appear in large numbers, they give rise to a landscape similar to a hill tundra. The crossing of such moss swamps is made difficult by the fact that the frozen earth has gaps, probably because of warm springs, and, accordingly in such places one can sink to unfathomable depths. Where gold mining is pursued, the taiga as a rule is destroyed beforehand by forest fires set off intentionally. The taiga thus gives way to a horrible, plundered landscape, in which there are numerous, deserted huts, which, overgrown with bushes, are falling into ruin and increase still more the despair of the picture. The region does not have larger localities. There are some villages, such as Potekhino and Bryatan in the center of the depression, in which there are larger supply warehouses from which the widely scattered settlements of gold washers are supplied. The extraction of gold, now run by the state, brings rich yields and has made the depression into one of the most important gold areas in the Far East. The gold streams lie along the Zeya and the Gilyuy and their tributaries. The very great swampiness and the existence of

[316] [37] [361] [316]

on the Manchurian side, lies the city of Heino (Sakhalyan), from whence there is a spur to the railroad network of Manchuria. The area around the lower course of the Bureya has the same character in terms of landscape as do the plains on the Zeya. The nearness of the highland permits the basic rock to come out more often here. The population is likewise dense and in the valley of the Bureya penetrates farther toward the north into the highland. The center of the region is the little city of Bureya, which lies at the point where the railroad crosses the Bureya River. A railroad line, which is 43 kilometers long, branches off from here to Raychikhinsk, the center of the largest brown coal deposit in the Amur country. Zavitaya, from which a new railroad line has been built to Poyarkovo on the Amur, /249/ has acquired a growing importance during the most recent period.

The brown coal fields lie between the railroad and the Amur and stretch from the Bureya in the east to the Zavitaya in the west, covering an area of 600 square kilometers. Raychikhinsk and Kivdinskiy are the centers of the coal mining. The transporting of the coal is done for the most part by railroad to the Bureya station, where there are opportunities to transfer the goods to river shipping.

The northern part of the Zeya-Bureya plain is drained primarily by the Selemdzha. The population here decreases rapidly toward the north, and settlement is limited to the valley areas of the rivers. On the Zeya, settlement reaches to the town of the same name at the foot of the Tukuringra Mountain Range; and on the Selemdzha, settlement ends approximately at Norsk. Both rivers are regularly traveled by steamships as far as the localities named. With the new construction of the BAM, which goes from the middle Zeya and runs through the area toward the east and crosses over the Selemdzha at the locality of Norsk mentioned above, new prospects have opened up for the further development of these regions, which are favorable for settlement but which in the past were too remote.

The Bureya Mountain Country

The Bureya Highland has a central position in the Amur country. It forces the Amur to make its large southern bend; and, in the south where it joins the Little Khingan, it makes a path to the east free for the Amur only in a narrow break-through valley. In the same place the Bureya Highland shoves itself like a wedge into the great depressions running along the Amur and separates the Zeya-Bureya plain in the

133 west from the depressions on the lower Amur and Amgun.

For the most part the highland comprises, as its inner zone, the drainage area of the Bureya, which also is bordered by the two main chains of the highland: i.e., in the west by the Turana Ridge, which is the watershed toward the Zeya, and in the east by the Bureya Mountain Range, which represents the watershed toward the lower Amur.

The Bureya Mountain Range forms the backbone of the highland. It begins on the Amur as the continuation of the Little Khingan which stretches from Manchuria over the river toward the northeast. The Bureya Range is, therefore, also known under the name of Little Khingan. But here the Russian geographers, who designated the mountain chain generally as the Bureya Mountain Range, are to be followed. These mountains run principally toward the northeast, though the direction of individual sections changes from place to place. This continues until the mountain range runs into the already mentioned Dzhagdy Mountain Range, which comes from the west. Here in the north individual sections are known under special names: thus, the Duse-Alin', which in an arc surrounds the left source river of the Bureya (Levaya Bureya), and, adjoining the Duse-Alin' on the north, the Yam-Alin', which flows into the Dzhagdy Mountain Range. The Tam-Alin' and the Dzhagdy border on the north and the east the gold-rich area /250/ around the source and the upper course of the Selemdzha; while from the southern part of the Yam-Alin' a mighty massif, forming a watershed, shoves in toward the west between the Selemdzha and the upper Bureya. Here in the northern part of the Bureya Highland, where immense high plateaus unite in a narrow area, there also lie the highest elevations of the Bureya Mountain Range and also the highest elevations of the entire highland. The Yam-Alin' has several peaks which project 2,000 meters. Its highest point reaches 2,215 meters. Also the watershed massif between the sources of the Selemdzha and the Bureya has several gol'tsy, which are only a little inferior to the Yam-Alin' peaks and which project between 2,115 meters and 2,155 meters.

316 The area around the source of the Selemdzha is rich in gold and has gold-washing installations, which are in part mechanically run. But the remoteness of the region causes the very great difficulties 505 to the works which are directed by the state. The primary supply route is the Selemdzha, which is regularly traveled by steamers as far as Norsk, often designated as Norskiy-Sklad. And under favorable conditions the Selemdzha is even traveled as far as Selendzhinsk.

137 in constantly from the sea in the summer, have given these forests a peculiar appearance. The branches are covered with long lichen, which hang down like beards, and moss grows on the stems as far as the boughs. A thick layer of moss also envelops the earth, and with every step water springs from the damp cushion. In the deeper places and also in the middle part of the highland, larches then appear as forest-formers, and the forests gradually become purely larch forests, and also fill the valley areas as far as the middle courses of the great rivers and press far to the south. The reason for this can be seen above all in the fact that the cold air masses flow down into the valleys and thus prevent the expansion of other types of trees. Only on the lower courses of the rivers flowing toward the south do deciduous trees set in. The larch forests which cover the bulk of the Bureya Highland are economically the most valuable.

•316 The valley of the Niman was once among the most famous of the gold fields in the Far East. But the deposits are already exhausted. In their place the gold fields in the area around the upper course of the Bureya have now appeared, but these cannot compete in yield with those of the Selemdzha. The valley of the Bureya serves as the con-
505 necting path to the gold dressing installations. When the water level is good, the Bureya can be used by steamers for 345 kilometers as far as the locality of Chekunda, and occasionally even as far as Umal'ta. From Chekunda down the greater drops already work so strongly against water vessels that from here on the boats as a rule have to be drawn by
487 horses. The last part of the way then is traveled by car or with riding horses and pack horses. An extension of this route toward the east leads over a pass, which is more than 1,000 meters high, to the gold fields on the upper course of the Kerbi, a tributary of the Amgun, which already belongs to the lower Amur. This much-traveled old Bureya gold route has today for the most part lost the importance it once had, since rich deposits of molybdenum and especially of coal have been found in the valley of the upper Bureya and a railroad has been built there.

316 There is molybdenum in the valley of the Umal'ta, a left tributary of the upper Bureya. Here a great molybdenum works has been erected in Ust'-Umal'ta. The hard coal deposits fall into two parts, into the deposit on the upper Bureya and the Tyrma deposit, which are separated from one another only by tectonic occurrences with
496 succeeding erosion. For the /252/ opening up of these deposits a railroad line is being built from Izvestkovyy, which lies west of Birakan on the Amur Railroad. This new railroad line leads over the Bureya

361 uninhabited except for in the southern part. Heavier settlement in terms of area covered can be found only in the southern part of the highland, where a contiguous belt of settlements meets us both along the Amur River. While the belt of settlements along the Amur River is certainly purely agricultural, industrial activity is to be encountered along the railroad in the area of the Bureya Mountain Range. In Bira
• 316 hard coal is mined /253/, iron ore lies west of Bira in Kimkan, and farther on in the vicinity of the railroad there are known to be supplies of magnesite, manganese, and fluorspar. Gold is also there and is extracted from the gold streams of the Sutar valley. This sourthern part of the Bureya Highland belongs to the Jewish Autonomous Oblast. It will be discussed in context in the following chapter.

/Sketch Map of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast/

The Amur Plain

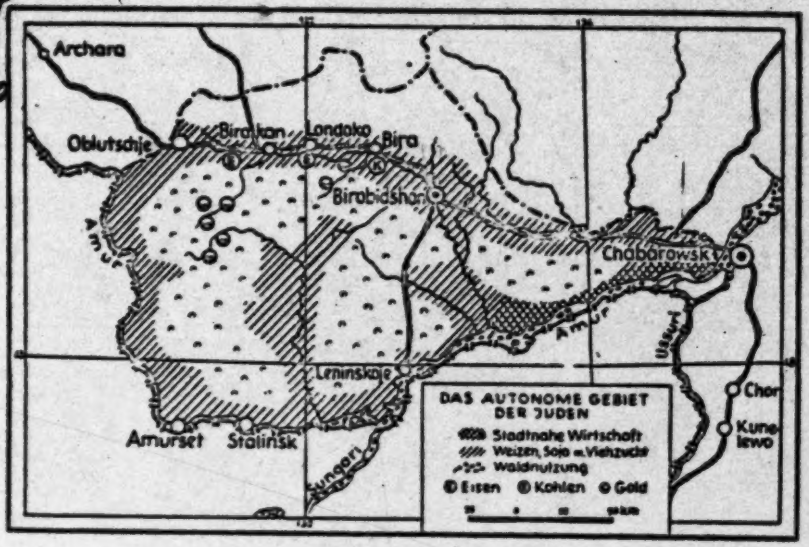
133 This region extends from the eastern slopes of the Bureya Mountain Range to the shore of the lower Amur, and it forms a vast lowland covered with meadow steppe. This lowland is scarely inferior to the Zeya-Bureya plain in the luxuriant growth of grass. The mean height of the plain is 45 meters. On the eastern side of the Bureya Mountain Range there run parallel to this range some mountain ridges, which go beyond the 1,000 meter mark only in the rarest of cases, such as in the Badzhal'skiy Mountain Range.

The Amur plain is regarded as a continuation of the Ussuri-Khanka depression and represents a graben zone, which is set between the Bureya Mountain Range on the west and the Sikhote-Alin' on the east.

The plain itself is divided into the flood area, which can be from a few kilometers up to 20 kilometers wide, and the real plain, which begins with a step. Only the edge of the plain is cut up by the rivers; otherwise the plain is for the most part completely flat and toward the mountains goes gradually over into a hilly landscape. The country on the right bank of the Amur below the mouth of the Ussuri is more varied in form /254/ because of the spurs of the Sikhote-Alin'. This area is generally higher, and its landscape is gently rolling to hilly.

Even though the external picture of this area recalls that of the Zeya-Bureya plain, the Amur plain, nevertheless, differs because of its greater swampiness, which goes back in the first place to the damper

Sketch Map of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast:



Economy in the Vicinity of a City
Wheat, soy beans, with livestock
Exploitation of the forests
(E) Iron
(K) Coal
Gold

other hand, an elevation still appears to hold sway at present. Many rivers emptying into the sea show delta formations. 133

As a consequence of the southern current running along the coast, numerous narrow tongues of land separating small bays from the sea have formed. All these tongues of land point toward the south. The deltas mostly lie left of the river courses, which, therefore, show a wandering to the right and which also dig under the shore on the right side. The sea current is weaker and irregular on the southern coast, which is heavily broken up; thus tongues of land here can run in all directions.

The most important bay on the east coast is Ol'ga Bay. It was discovered in 1787 by La Perouse and forms one of the best natural harbors on the coast. Lying off the bay are the small, rocky Chikhachev Islands. The bay itself has a diameter of 3 kilometers and is on the mean 25 meters deep. Once it was at least three times as large and reached much more deeply into the land toward the west. Today the valley areas of the rivers emptying into the bay become swampy. When there is a strong east wind, a backward flow can even be determined. The old marine abrasion terraces are very well preserved on the mountains at a height of 25, 30, and 120 meters. The low mountains surrounding the bay consist of granite, quartz porphyry, and sedimentary rock and contain above all iron /264/ in addition to lead [135] ore containing copper and silver. This iron is magnetite with an iron content of 50 percent; the iron is being mined here. The harbor locality of Ol'ga has several thousand inhabitants. In the hinterland of the bay [141] Russian peasant settlers have made their appearance.

The Tetyuke Bay has a greater economic importance. Here, 35 kilometers from the coast, is the most important zinc-lead-silver ore in the Far East. A narrow-gauge railroad connects the mining installations and the preparatory installations with the harbor, which has gotten modern loading equipment very recently. The harbor locality has several thousand inhabitants. Here, too, there are agricultural settlements in the hinterland. 316 504

Between the two above-mentioned bays is a third bay, the Vladimir Bay. It is surrounded on all sides by granite mountains which are up to 225 meters high. The bay has a depth of up to 12 meters. Fresh water lakes and swamps enable us to recognize the former larger expanse of the bay. Two projecting rocky peninsulas enclose the bay. Vladimir is known for its installations for the extraction of iodine from seaweed. 133

these the wood industry should be mentioned in first place. It is concentrated above all in Shkotovo (approximately 10,000 inhabitants) and Tigrovka (approximately 5,000 inhabitants), both of which lie on the railroad line to Suchan. The wood industry is also concentrated in Okeanskaya (approximately 2,300 /277/ inhabitants) to the north of Vladivostok, where a large wood factory delivers veneer wood for export.

The industry in Vladivostok, like industry generally in the southern Ussuri country, is based on coal, which is on hand here in rich measure. Besides the various smaller coal mining localities, Artem and Suchan should be mentioned here as the principal localities producing coal. Already by 1938 the coal mined in Artem exceeded that mined in Suchan by threefold, and since then coal mining in Artem has been very much further increased. To Artem belong also the two coal districts, Ugol'naya and Trudovaya. The new railroad line, which leads along the western coast of the Bay of Peter the Great to Pos'yet and Kraskino, connects the most important coastal localities, which above all pursue the catching of fish. In the same region there are some sovkhoz for breeding stags at Peschanaya, in Krabbe, and on the Gamova Peninsula.

Sakhalin Island

Sakhalin came to Russia through the treaties of Aigun (1858) and of Peking (1860). However, until 1871 Russia had to share possession of the island with Japan, which in early times had already erected numerous factories in the southern part of the island. Through the unhappy Russo-Japanese War, Russia lost the southern half of the island to Japan. The fiftieth latitude was determined as the boundary line. The outcome of World War II brought the Soviet Union again in possession of the entire island.

Sakhalin covers 80,000 square kilometers and stretches from north to south in an almost meridional direction for about 1,000 kilometers. Once feared as a prisoners' colony of the Czarist empire, the island is notorious for its raw climate. The famous Russian writer A. Chekhov writes, "Sakhalin has no climate at all; the weather is eternally bad and gloomy." The island owes this unhappy reputation to the influence of the cool Sea of Okhotsk, to which the bulk of the island is fully given over. The greatest part of the island is covered with thick forests, which recall the taiga of Siberia. Along the coast

means of transportation. They have built 653.2 kilometers of railroad lines, and in addition they have improved the land roads, too, so that they can be traveled regularly by buses. However, this opening up to traffic has generally been limited to the regions near the coast and to the most southerly part of the island, while the greatest part of the interior, as in northern Sakhalin, remained left to itself. Now the most important coal deposits also lie not far from the coast, and the Japanese succeeded in bringing production in a large number of mines up to approximately two million tons by the beginning of the last war. Of this 500,000 tons could be exported to Japan. The remainder was used in Sakhalin, above all in the wood industry, which had been developed on a large scale by the Japanese. Since 1929 the Japanese had gone about, in a planned fashion, the building up of a cellulose and paper industry in southern Sakhalin, in order to be able to supply their home economy with these products. At the end, just before the outbreak of war, there were eleven large cellulose and paper factories in the country, and their production constituted almost 90 percent of the industrial production of southern Sakhalin. The share of these factories in the total production of Karafuto was around 60 percent. In addition, southern Sakhalin delivered large quantities of wood as cut wood and raw lumber. Southern Sakhalin was also very important to Japan as a base for fishing, which produced rich surpluses. However, in one thing the Japanese did not succeed: the securing of food for the population from the island itself. In this particular Sakhalin was an importing region, although the Japanese made every effort to expand agriculture and the breeding of livestock.

/283/ After the evacuation of the Japanese and the taking over of southern Sakhalin by the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union has striven to fill the land with people and to get the economy's production going again. On this there are numerous reports, which tell especially of the founding of kolkhoz and sovkhoz. In addition there are constant reports on the establishment of fishing stations and of fish-processing central stations, but there are only a very few reports on the taking over of coal mines and of getting them into production. There is little information on the installations of the wood industry, although it is to be assumed that the Soviet Union has above all laid value on getting the industrial plants into production, and apparently, too, everything has been done so that these plants could take up their production again.

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES, FAR EAST
AND EIGHTH UNITED STATES ARMY (REAR)
Office of the Psychological Warfare Officer
APO 343

ANALYSIS #070156

Klynarchik/hy/266-2755
18 January 1956

000 USSR: MAGADAN, CAPITAL OF THE KOLYMA GOLD EMPIRE

Part I: The Rise of Magadan (1927-1946)

1) Introduction

2) Physical Features of Kolyma

3) Administration

4) Population

5) Development of the Kolyma Area (1927-1931)

6) Assumption of Control by Dalstroy (Far Eastern Construction Administration) - 1931-1932

a. The Leadership of Berzin (1932-1937)

b. Violence under Garanin (1937-1938)

c. Blundering of Vyshnyevetsky (1938-1941)

d. The Regime of Nishikov (1941-present?)

7) The Kolyma Buildup (1932-1946)

8) The City of Magadan

9) Summation

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Part I. The Rise of Magadan (1927-1946)

316
466 1) Introduction: Until the early 1930's the Kolyma region in the northeastern section of Siberia was practically deserted; the only population consisted of several native tribes who were engaged primarily in reindeer breeding. Approximately 175 independent miners were also in the area for the purpose of extracting gold from the rich fields around the Kolyma River; however, in 1931 the Soviet Government, at that time completely lacking gold reserves, began one of its largest enterprises until that time—the exploitation of Kolyma gold on an increasing scale. Labor was primarily prisoners, both criminal and "counter-revolutionary," who were sent to the Magadan area by the hundreds of thousands yearly in an attempt to build the area into a self-sufficient region with only one mission—ship every available ounce of gold to Moscow.

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121 The information contained in this report is primarily derived from published reports made by prisoners who have returned from the Kolyma area after having served their prison terms as forced laborers. Although admittedly this report is historical in nature rather than a concise evaluation of the present situation, it was considered appropriate, due to a lack of general information and knowledge of the area, to present

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466 According to other sources the number of ships in Dalstroy service is higher than the four ships cited above; it has been positively stated that in 1940-1941 five more steamers (Minsk, Kiev, Igarka, Komsomol, and Uritsky) and the icebreaker, "Sakhalin," were in operation with a total shipping capacity of 35,000 passengers. (Note: Local Soviet Far Eastern radio stations which service areas with shipping administrations have been noted to make reference to the Uritsky, and in the course of the past six months a vessel named "Komsomolsk" may be the ship "Komsomol," as included in the ships carrying slave labor. This possible identification is noted because monitoring of local Soviet Far Eastern radio stations has always been plagued with the difficulty of "making out" names of persons, ships, and the like."

It goes without saying that prisoners were also shipped into Kolyma by the northern route--the run from Archangel east through the Arctic Ocean. This route was attempted because during the 1930's Soviet ships carrying slave laborers on the run from Vladivostok to Magadan passed through the Sea of Japan and the Tatar Strait, both of which were constantly filled with Japanese vessels: for obvious reasons, the Russians were not too eager to have the Fascist Japanese circles learn of this Soviet cargo. However, due to the extreme difficulties of navigation along the northern route, successes were few; instances of ships carrying laborers being caught in the ice with no survivors were not few. In summation, even if the northern route is discounted, the importation of 400,000 to 500,000 laborers annually is not impossible.

161 Recent estimates of the total population of the area have ranged between 300,000 and 1,000,000; however, inspite of the fantastic death rate among prisoners, millions have been imported as laborers, and there is reason to believe that there is approximately between one and one and a half million people in the area.

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655 5) Development of the Kolyma Area (1927-1931): Commercial gold mining really began in the Kolyma fields in 1927, and at first the entire production was in the hands of free agents who ventured into the area. "In 1929, according to official Soviet statements, gold was being panned in three fields,.... There were altogether 65 prospectors working in the three fields, and a total of 108 men living in the adjoining settlements."[2] According to Soviet law at that time, all gold was to be delivered to the government trust, Soyus-Zoloto (Union Gold); however, no branch of this trust was closer to the Kolyma gold fields than that office in Okhotsk, which was still more than 1,000 miles from the fields. Furthermore, private gold buyers were willing to pay a higher price for gold than was the government which was attempting to keep gold prices on a level with the rising prices of commodities. This situation had the result that a large "black market" in gold arose, and much of the gold, according to Soviet officials, went into the hands of the Japanese, whose fishing boats were almost omnipresent in the Sea of Okhotsk. These fishing boats brought merchandise to sell in the gold fields, and this can be substantiated by the fact that much of the goods in the Magadan area at that time bore Japanese labels.

The Soviet Government found itself faced with two possible solutions to the problem: either it could permit free-lance gold prospecting as had been the case in California and Alaska, or it could invest a large amount of money into the area in an attempt to build up its own resources for extracting the gold. The first measure was hardly feasible, especially by a government whose basic principle was opposition to free enterprise, and the second possibility was practically impossible because the Soviet Union at that time had no money to invest. It was in this manner that the Soviet Government decided to invest its only and largest asset at that time--people. However, since few volunteers were

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2 Ibid., p. 113. 1 [the Kolyma region—Analyst]

willing to venture into such an inhospitable area, prisoner labor was considered to be the only solution whereby sufficient numbers of personnel would be available in Kolyma to exploit the gold resources there. It was at this time that the collectivization program was in progress in the Soviet Union, and labor was to be found in abundance in the form of those sturdy peasants, especially in the Ukraine and White Russia, who opposed the confiscation of their land into collectivized enterprises. Furthermore, previous attempts at the use of prisoner labor had been satisfactory in the construction of the Baltic-White Sea Canal. Consequently, it was decided to move large numbers of "socially hostile elements," as they were called, into the Magadan area to exploit the gold fields. 316 655

6) Assumption of Control by Dalstroy (Far Eastern Construction Administration) - 1931-1932: In the winter of 1931-1932 a special administrative unit was established under the name of Dalstroy, and this organization was responsible for the development of the extreme northeastern part of Siberia—the primary task was the exploitation of the gold-rich Kolyma region. It should be noted that Dalstroy was under the direct control of the GPU (later reorganized into the NKVD and again into the MVD), which immediately undertook to supply the organization with huge numbers of laborers. It might be mentioned that Dalstroy had "first pick" of all the prisoners throughout the Soviet Union; simultaneously Dalstroy procured adequate numbers of free-labor specialists, namely, engineers of all types who were to organize the actual exploitation of gold. 635 466

a. The Leadership of Berzin (1932-1937): Berzin was the head of Dalstroy during the years 1932-1937, and since he was the very first of the NKVD chiefs of the organization, his administration was filled with a terrible loss of life; this was not permitted to interfere with his mission, however.

After a preliminary examination of the situation, it was decided to establish a port on the Sea of Okhotsk and penetrate gradually inland rather than to use an overland route. The harbor of Nagayev, located close to the Ola River estuary, was selected as the primary base of operations; this harbor is at present the port which services the chief city of Magadan. (Note: This harbor is approximately 10 miles long and 3 miles wide.) In order to show the complete uninhabitability of the surrounding area near Nagayevo, the port area has been described as "surrounded by ridges of rock which overhang the water. The rocks, sometimes rising a thousand feet or more, protect the harbor, but on their open sides the winds blow unchecked. Down below where the steep cliffs meet the water, there is no land for human shelter. Above, one is blown off one's feet by the force of the wind that is cold, damp, penetrating, and unequalled in ferocity anywhere in the world."[3] Beyond the ridges surrounding the harbor there is a swamp of the type familiar to this region, under which perennial ice exists; beyond the swamps come the taiga.

In the summer of 1932 ships were dispatched from Vladivostok loaded with Dalstroy cargo, including machinery, equipment, foodstuffs, and manpower. The steamers were gifts to the NKVD by the Soviet Government, and each ship made from 12 to 15 voyages from Vladivostok that navigation season. These ships were specially constructed to hold large numbers of prisoners, and machine-guns covered every inch of the cells. No precautions were neglected to prevent the escape of prisoners in the areas where Japanese ships might rescue escapees and learn the nature of the Magadan enterprise.

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3 Ibid., p. 117.

491 invasion, it should be mentioned that the history of the Nagayev harbor development, as cited previously, was again repeated.

316 The actual gold mining operations were controlled by a special gold mining trust within the Dalstroy organization. In 1939-1940 this trust was composed of seven administrative agencies, each in control of its own area. These agencies were

1) The Southern Mining Administration, which had jurisdiction over sixteen gold fields, including the principal fields of Srednikan, Beriskin, and others;

2) The Northern Mining Administration, which was in charge of twelve fields;

3) The Western Mining Administration, which controlled twelve fields;

4) The Southwestern Mining Administration, with eight fields under its jurisdiction;

5) The Northwestern Mining Administration, with six fields under its control;

6) The Chai-Urinsk Mining Administration, with eight fields therein; and

7) The Tepkino-Detrinsk Mining Administration, with four fields. However, it should be noted that, although these seven agencies controlled and directed the activities of 66 gold fields, some of them are spread over such large areas that they should be called groups of adjacent gold fields. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that the fields east of the Kolyma estuary, which in 1940 were only beginning to be exploited, have not been included in the above tabulation. Information in this respect is nil.

466 The total number of prisoners who work these gold areas[1] is not known; however, according to estimates by prisoners who have managed to return after having served their terms and fled to the west, the normal number of prisoners at each field varies between 5,000 and 10,000 workers. The number reaches its highest peak in May or June of each year: the mining season begins in June at which time new groups of prisoners are arriving at Magadan from Vladivostok. However, by the end of the mining season, the total figure has again decreased due to the heavy death toll; this has been corroborated by Polish prisoners who worked in the Kolyma gold areas after the Soviet-German division of Poland. These same Polish army troops mentioned a camp on the Chukotsk Peninsula, where some 3,000 Polish troops were sent in August 1940. However, all 3,000 died while working in the lead mines, not only due to the usual bad conditions but also due to lead poisoning. Therefore, assuming that the number of prisoner-workers per field averages some 5,000 persons, there is reason to believe that there were at least 330,000 prisoners engaged in gold mining activities in Kolyma. Of course, this figure represents only an estimate for the known gold fields; however, it should be remembered that this total will be swelled by the numbers of women prisoners who are engaged in various other activities like agriculture, lumbering, among others. (Note: No reference has ever been noted where women prisoners have been utilized in the gold fields.) Furthermore, since vast new areas have been in the process of exploitation, including the construction of roads, it goes without saying that additional large number of prisoners are utilized for this purpose; also, there are other mining areas, such as those east of the Kolyma, whereat no doubt large numbers of prisoners are also engaged. Consequently, although no exact figures

1 [i.e., the Kolyma region, Siberia -- Analyst]